rank came certain small castes of middle class, non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; its members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-military: Chidigans or funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen of all the castes above them; and Vilakkataravans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group, lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet.

564 kanam tenants of the village, on a triennial ten-
427 ure (verum-pattam) retaining about one-fifth of the produce for their own sustenance and paying
564 the rest as rent in kind. One or more small
437 patrilineal groups of each of the other castes had what was called a desam avakasam or "village right," namely the right to work exclusively for members of their natal village. Sometimes, in the case of small castes such as astrologers and barbers, the right might extend to several adjacent villages who collectively shared the labour of one servant family. Avakasams were hereditary in patrilineal groups; they involved payment in paddy and vegetables by each patron household, of whatever caste, after the two harvests of the year, and the right to take part in village festivals and be fed at higher caste festivals and marriages.

[791] Astrologers and artisans were hired by all the higher castes of the village, by each other and
[305] by Iravas who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the lower polluting castes of this group, but not for the "good" castes who em-
[296] ployed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the lower polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman; however, the low [26] caste washerman's lineage must provide clean cloths for the "good" castes after death, menstruation and childbirth and had ritual obligations to high caste women on the two latter occasions. Bow-
564 makers served Nayars and Iravas. Each of the
783 lower polluting castes was endogamous and interdined equally only within the caste. Rules of

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

"if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." Concerning Nāyar females, Pierre Loti writes* that "les femmes ont presque toutes les traits d'une finesse particulière. Elles se font des bandeaux a la Vierge, et, avec le reste de leurs cheveux, très noirs et très lisses, composent une espèce de galette ronde qui se porte au sommet de la tête, en avant et de côté, retombant un peu vers le front comme une petite toque cavalièrement posée, en contraste sur l'ensemble de leur personne qui demeure toujours grave et hiératique."] The Nāyars are particularly cleanly. Buchanan writes that "the higher ranks of the people of Malayala use very little clothing, but are remarkably clean in their persons. Cutaneous disorders are never observed except among slaves and the lowest orders, and the Nāyar women are remarkably careful, repeatedly washing with various saponaceous plants to keep their hair and skins from every impurity." The washerman is constantly in requisition. No dirty cloths are ever worn. When going for temple worship, the Nāyar women dress themselves in the tattu form by drawing the right corner of the hind fold of the cloth between the thighs, and fastening it at the back. The cloth is about ten cubits long and three broad, and worn in two folds. The oldest ornament of the Nāyar women is the necklace called nāgapatam, the pendants of which resemble a cobra's hood. The Nāyar women wear no ornament on the head, but decorate the hair with flowers. The nāgapatam, and several other forms of neck ornament, such as kazhultila, nalupanti, puttali,

* L'Inde (sans les Anglais).